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Chagoya, Javier

Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey California

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Military Operations Research Society Selects Thesis Award Recipient

Javier Chagoya | March 15, 2018



Finalists for this quarter's Military Operations Research Society (MORS) Tisdale Award, from left, Lt. John Tanalega, Singapore Army Capt. Penelope Chia, Lt. Cmdr. Sean Teter and Lt. j.g. Robert Slye, presented their theses to an audience of Operations Research faculty and students in Glasgow Hall, March 8. The Tisdale Award recognizes the quarter's top operations research thesis for near-term operational impact.

The NPS Department of Operations Research (OR) held its latest Military Operations Research Society (MORS) Tisdale Thesis Award competition in Glasgow Hall, March 8. Four finalists were selected to present their theses to a panel of OR faculty judges including department Chair, Distinguished Professor Patricia Jacobs.

“It is rewarding to hear how the students have applied their NPS OR education to research that can lead to the increased operating effectiveness of near term U.S. and allied military forces,” said Jacobs.

Each student sought to find where improvements in performance, minimization in cost, and optimization could be achieved for their chosen problem using a hierarchy of analyses, mathematics and computational techniques.

While the four students were given 10 minutes to talk about their months-long research with minimal supporting slides, followed by a brief Q&A from the judges and audience, only one could be selected. And that officer was Lt. John Tanalega, and his thesis on Analyzing Unmanned Surface Tactics with the Lightweight Interstitials Toolkit for Mission Engineering Using Simulation (LITMUS).

“I used the SEED Center for Data Farming smart and efficient design platform to help frame future combat modeling in LITMUS. Scouting and detection is a major factor, and finding the optimal sensor ranges in these applications increases a successful first-to-fire assault making for a clear advantage in the battlespace,” said Tanalega.

“I feel extremely grateful for being selected for this award. I’m heavily indebted to the amazing faculty and staff in the Operations Research Department. Turning a naval officer with a bachelor’s degree in English into an OR analyst is no easy feat, and none of this would have been possible without them,” he added.

Tanalega also thanked the members of his cohort and others who helped him along the way through the OR curriculum.

“I’m also grateful for those whose friendship and camaraderie helped get me through the two years of the curriculum,” added Tanalega. “There’s the CO of my last ship, Cmdr. Matthew Hall, an NPS OR graduate, who gave encouragement to me to choose OR. Finally, there’s the love and support of my wife, Michelle, and my parents, Joy and Abel Tanalega, who kept me going all along the way.”

Following graduation, Tanalega will travel to Navy Surface Warfare Officer School (SWOS) in Newport, R.I. for department head school.

